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# The History of Mary Wood.

## THE HOUSE-MAID.

*Or, the Danger of false Excuses.*

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26

# Hiſtory of Mary Wood, &c.

MR. Heartwell, the worthy clergyman of a country pariſh, was ſitting in the porch of his little parſonage, when he ſaw a figure rather flying than running down a hill near his houſe, the ſwiftneſs of whoſe motion made it hard to diſcern *what* ſhe was, much leſs could he gueſs *who* ſhe was. She fled directly towards him, and flung herſelf at his feet; almoſt breathleſs, with difficulty ſhe pronounced the words, "O ſir, ſave me! for pity's ſake hide me in your houſe—they will be here in a moment—hide me this inſtant!—indeed I am innocent!" then without waiting for his anſwer ſhe jumped up and ruſhed by him into the houſe, the good man ran after her, and catching her hand led her up ſtairs into his bed-room, and putting her into a cloſet within it, told her, no one ſhould come there to hurt her. Then hearing a noiſe he looked out of his window and ſaw ſeveral men and women running almoſt as faſt as the young woman had before, and his maid Bridget (who had ſeen them ſooner from her own window) running to

meet them, and to ask what was the matter. He had forgotten to bid her be silent about the young woman, indeed he did not know that she had seen her; but the truth is, she was amusing herself in a very idle manner, with looking at the road out of her garret window, and had seen with great surprise the wild behaviour of the poor girl, which raised her curiosity. This she now hoped to satisfy by stopping the posse that was running by; instead of answering her questions, they asked if she had seen a girl about seventeen, that was running from justice pass that way. "What in a linen gown and green petticoat," said she? "without a bonnet, and her hair and her cap flying?" "the same, the same," they cried; "which way did she go?" "Why, what do you want to do with her," says Bridget; "for I should be loth to betray the poor thing to any harm." "Why, you would not conceal a thief," would you? said they. "She is a thief and has robbed her master." "Nay if she be a thief, she may rob *my* master too," says Bridget, "for she is gone up stairs with him." Upon this they all turned towards the house, and were coming in when Mr. Heartwell met them. He heard the last words, and was not a little disturbed at the idea of having the girl found in his house, for as she knelt at his feet he thought he knew her face, and had by degrees recollected that, though much grown since he saw her, she must certainly be the daughter of Matthew Wood, an honest labourer, who had lived some years in his parish, and died there three or four years before. The long illness before his death had reduced his wife to such poverty, that she and her child would have perished had

not the good Vicar's charity helped out the ſcantineſs of the pariſh relief. Mr. Heartwell, after having buried the poor man, tried to find a place for the girl and ſome help for her mother, who being in years, and her health much injured by fatigue and grief, in nurſing and loſing her huſband, was quite unable to work. By applying to Lady Worthy, whoſe ſeat was a few miles diſtant, he had the good fortune to get her into one of the almshouſes which that good lady had built and endowed; here ſhe was comfortably ſupported, and her daughter permitted to be with her 'till ſhe could find a ſervice. As by theſe means Goody Wood and her daughter were placed at a diſtance from him, Mr. Heartwell had not ſince ſeen them; but was ſatisfied that under Lady Worthy's protection they would be taken care of.

The people who were now ruſhing into Mr. Heartwell's houſe, ſtopped on ſeeing him, and on his aſking what they wanted there, one of the moſt decent looking men ſtepped forward and puſhing the reſt a little back, ſaid, "I ax pardon ſir for our bouldneſs in coming into your Worſhip's houſe, but we have got a warrant here for a young perſon that we be tould ran in here." "A warrant" ſaid Mr. H——, "Why what is the matter? What has ſhe done?"——"Pleaſe your Worſhip ſhe's a thief and has robbed her maſter's houſe. We have had ſad doings at our village—Squire Banks's houſe has been robbed too by his gardener and dairy maid, and they are both gone off. This poor girl, I ſuppoſe, learnt their wicked ways (for ſhe would keep company with them) and the ſame

night that they made off, it is thought that ſhe let them into Farmer Boucher's houſe; and in the morning as ſure as can be, he found his bureau broke open and his money gone." "But what proof is there that this girl was concerned in the robbery, or that ſhe let in the robbers?" "Why, ſir, ſhe had been telling a mort of lies about them, and that made them ſuſpect her. So they ſearched her box, and as ſure as can be, there they found ſealed up in a paper, ſix ſilver tea-ſpoons of the farmer's, with an E and a B upon them as his are marked with. She perteſted they were none of his'n, but were given by a friend to keep for her, but alack a day! there is no believing a word that comes out of her mouth; ſo nobody minded her; and when we ax'd her who this friend was that gave them to her to keep, ſhe was all as red as fire and would not ſpeak. So the farmer left us to take care of her whilſt he went to Juſtice Gallway's for a warrant. We had ſhut her up ſafe as we thought in a chamber, whilſt we ate a bit of dinner and drank a little of neighbour Boucher's ale, but when he came back and we went thither to take her, lo and behold ſhe was not to be found. The window was open, and as it was not very high from the ground, we gueſs ſhe let herſelf down from it. We now ſet off in purſuit of her, all but the farmer, who, being pretty fat and purſy, was not for running a race—So he gave us the warrant, and a boy telling us as how ſhe took this way, we ran 'till we ſaw a woman running, about half a mile before us, but afterwards we loſt ſight of her; and pleaſe your Worſhip, your maid tells us as how ſhe made into this wery houſe."—"It is true,"

ſaid Mr. Heartwell, "that ſhe is in my houſe, and if you will conſent to let her remain here a day or two, I will be anſwerable for her appearance when called upon. In the mean time I will endeavour to find out the truth; for it would be a ſad thing to ruin ſuch a young creature, by hurrying her to priſon before we were ſure of her guilt. Farmer Boucher is an honeſt humane man, he knows my character, and I dare ſay will oblige me by ſtopping all further proceedings againſt Mary Wood, and leaving her in my care 'till I can talk to her and bring her to declare the truth." "That is what ſhe is not much uſed to, I am afraid, ſir," ſaid the man, "howſomdever, I will tell neighbour Boucher what your Worſhip ſays, and you will be pleaſed to take care that ſhe does not get out of the window." "Boucher's wife is living, is ſhe not? (ſaid Mr. Heartwell) what does ſhe ſay of the girl? ſhe muſt know more of her character than her maſter can." "Yes, yes! ſhe be living and looking, and a good kind of body ſhe is, but at preſent ſhe is from home and knows nothing of all this buſtle; for ſhe went two days ago to viſit her father at Stoke. She is expected home to-night, and then your Worſhip may have the ſpeech of her if you like."——They then pulled off their hats and civilly turned back to their village. Mr. Heartwell immediately went up to his priſoner, whom he found ſunk on the ground in his cloſet and half dead with terror; for ſhe had heard a good deal of what had paſſed, and feared every moment that Mr. Heartwell would give her up to be dragged to priſon. She knew ſhe had been detected in ſome falſehoods, that would make

againſt her; and though ſhe was not guilty of the robbery, ſhe had enough to reproach herſelf with to take from her all the comfort and confidence of innocence; ſhe had therefore nothing leſs than the terrors of hanging, or being ſent to Botany Bay before her eyes.

But we muſt now go back and tell by what deceit poor Mary was firſt brought into trouble.

When firſt Lady Worthy took her up, ſhe got her a place at Mrs. Tsueby's, a widow lady of great piety and worth, who lived in the neighbouring town. She had a boy about ſix years old, her two maids were growing old in her ſervice; ſhe took this girl to help them. The next day after ſhe came, ſhe bid her own maid ſhew her how to ſweep and duſt the beſt parlour. The maid, after ſhewing her what ſhe was to do, and giving her a great charge not to touch the pier glaſs which ſhe herſelf would clean, gave her a long broom and left her to her ſweeping. The little boy, who had not ſeen any thing ſo young and lively in the houſe, took a great fancy to Mary, who was no leſs fond of him, he ſtaid in the room to ſee her ſweep it, and ſhe to amuſe him at the ſame time gave him an account of the wonders ſhe had ſeen performed in the ſtreet the day before, by a balance maſter, who poized a long pole on the palm of his hand and even upon his noſe, with other performances which, though not very wonderful in their kind, appeared ſo to her, who had never ſeen any thing like it. To make little Edward comprehend what ſhe meant by this balancing,

ſhe attempted to poize the long broom, ſetting the ſmall end on the palm of her hand, but not ſucceeding it fell on one ſide and unfortunately ſtruck the pier glaſs and broke it. Poor Mary cried out ſhe was undone, and begged Edward, if he had any pity, not to ſay ſhe did it. "Who then?" ſaid he, "you will not ſay it was I?" "No indeed," ſaid ſhe, "I will not lay it upon any body; only do not you contradict what I ſhall ſay." By this time Mrs. Trueby, who heard the ſmaſh of the glaſs, had haſtened down ſtairs and came into the room. "What glaſs did I hear crack?" ſaid ſhe—"O Mary! my precious pier glaſs, the beſt piece of furniture in my houſe, and a preſent from a dear friend who is now no more, quite ſpoilt! I valued it above ten times it's price! Is this your awkwardneſs, Mary?" Poor Mary ſtood pale and trembling; but anſwered, "No indeed, madam." "Who did it then," ſaid ſhe, raiſing her voice? "A great bird, madam, (I do not know whether it was a pigeon) flew in at the window. I tried to drive it out, and it daſhed againſt the glaſs with it's bill and cracked it as you ſee." Little Edward, who was aſtoniſhed at her invention and aſſurance, looked amazed, ſhrugged up his ſhoulders and could ſcarce help laughing; his mother obſerved it, and ſo did Mary, who giving him a wink, ſaid, "maſter Edward knows it to be true, for he ſaw it as well as I."—"O fye, Mary," ſaid the boy—"that's too much—I would not have told of you, but when you ſay I know it to be true, you make me a liar as well as yourſelf; and my mamma ſays, if I tell lies God Almighty will

not love me." "Wicked girl," ſaid the lady, "would you teach my child to lie? pack up and begone out of my houſe, and you Edward I charge you tell me the truth;" upon this the child related the fact, and added—pray mamma forgive her, it was in trying to divert *me* that ſhe came by the accident." "No my dear," ſaid her mother, "I cannot forgive her, fooliſh and careleſs as it was, and grieved as I am for my favourite glaſs, I could have forgiven her my loſs; and though I ſpoke haſtily at firſt, I ſhould ſoon have conſidered her awkwardneſs and paſſed it over, but a girl that can ſo readily invent a lie, and try to draw *you* into it, I cannot poſſibly ſuffer to ſtay a day in my houſe, if you learnt to tell lies it would break my heart. The good lady, however, fearing the girl might get into miſchief, after much kind exhortation determined herſelf to carry her back to lady Worthy, aſſuring her that ſhe would not have parted with the girl on account of the accident, had it not been for the daring falſehood with which ſhe attempted to excuſe it. Lady Worthy, equally ſhocked, ſent for Goody Wood, and told her what had been her daughter's behaviour; adding, that ſhe had put it out of *her* power to ſerve her, for ſhe could never again venture to recommend her. The poor woman was quite overcome with grief, and did not dare to attempt to excuſe Mary's faults, but took her home in an agony of ſorrow, where the girl had the mortification to ſee that ſhe had not only ruined herſelf, but made her mother completely miſerable. And indeed the poor woman became ſo ill, that ſhe began to fear that ſhe ſhould be the cauſe of her death; this affected her very

much, and for a time ſhe was truly penitent, and reſolved never again to ſpeak falſely; but ſo ſtrong is cuſtom, and ſo weak was the principle on which ſhe acted, in her mind, that when ſhe ſaw her mother recover, ſhe ſoon returned to her little tricks and falſe excuſes. It was no wonder ſhe did not reform, for ſhe had no fear of offending God. Nobody took any notice of her, and the burden of maintaining her fell heavy on her mother and kept them both in extreme poverty. At length a gentlewoman who knew the ſtory, and was concerned that ſo young a creature ſhould be ruined, was prevailed upon, as ſhe had no children, to ſend for her. She aſked the girl why ſhe was diſmiſſed from Mrs. Trueby's? to which ſhe replied, "it was for breaking a pier-glaſs." "And was that the only reaſon of her turning you away ſo ſuddenly?" the girl looked ſullen, held down her head, and ſaid, "I believe ſo." "Go," ſaid the lady, "you will not do for me. I ſee you are not cured of your vile fault, and I will not take one whoſe word I can never depend on." So home went Mary with a heavy heart, and after trying to evade her mother's queſtions, was at laſt obliged to confeſs what had paſſed; this renewed all the grief of this poor parent, and Mary was again in diſgrace, and again promiſed to ſpeak truth for the future, but never begged of God for his grace. Mary grew tall and ſtrong, and was a well looking good humoured girl, lively, though kept down by poverty and diſgrace. At laſt a farmer's wife, who lived about two miles from her mother's, took her as a ſervant, and was for ſome time well pleaſed

with her. In the ſame village lived a gentleman whoſe name was Banks, he was gone on a tour and left his gardener and dairy maid to take care of the houſe; theſe ſervants, who made very free with their maſter's property in every way, uſed to call in Mary when ſhe went by on an errand. The gardener gave her fruit, and the dairy maid treated her with cream and ſometimes a ſyllabub. Theſe calls required excuſes from her for ſtaying on her errands. One day that they ſaw her paſſing by, they told her they were going in the evening to the fair, and aſked her to go with them. She replied, ſhe was ſure ſhe could not get leave to go that evening for they were going to finiſh their great waſh—"pooh! pooh!" ſaid they, "you *muſt* go —'tis the laſt day of the fair, and there is a tall woman and a dwarf, and I know not what to be ſeen." Mary's curioſity was ſtrongly tempted, and ſhe ſaid ſhe would try what ſhe could do. So ſhe went to her miſtreſs and told her ſhe had a meſſage from her mother to let her know ſhe was very ill, and begged ſhe would, if poſſible, get leave to come to her. Mrs. Boucher (her miſtreſs) was very good-natured, and ſaid ſhe was loth to keep her from her mother on ſuch an occaſion, but did not know how to ſpare her, they were ſo very buſy. Mary ſaid, "if ſhe would be kind enough to let her go at five o'clock ſhe would work very hard till then," and to this her miſtreſs conſented. Before that hour Mary run up to her garret, dreſt herſelf in a minute, and flew to Mr. Banks's time enough to join her friends ſetting out for the fair. When they had been gone about an hour, her mother, who unluckily had ſome buſineſs that way,

called to aſk her daughter how ſhe did; the miſtreſs, who herſelf let her in, was amazed to ſee her, and the poor woman was thunderſtruck when ſhe heard that the girl had pretended ſhe was ill and had ſent for her—and greatly alarmed to think where ſhe could be gone. She went about the village inquiring for her, and at laſt met a countryman ſhe knew, who told her ſhe need not fear any harm, for he was juſt come from the fair, where he ſaw her daughter with a man and woman at a booth chooſing ribbons; this did not comfort the mother, who went back to implore the clemency of Mrs. Boucher towards her imprudent child. Moved by her tears, and conſidering the force of curioſity and vanity in a girl of ſeventeen, ſhe at laſt promiſed not to turn her away if ſhe made proper ſubmiſſions, but to try her a little longer.

As Mary was coming home in the evening ſhe met one who told her what a ſearch her mother had been making for her, this threw her into a terror that ſpoilt all the pleaſure ſhe had enjoyed at the fair. She came home half dead with fear and fatigue, and threw herſelf at the feet of her miſtreſs, confeſſing her fault and making ſolemn promiſes never to repeat it; after ſevere reprimands, her miſtreſs at length forgave her, on condition that ſhe ſhould never again hold any acquaintance with that gardener and dairy maid, of whom ſhe told her ſhe had heard a bad character. Mary wept and promiſed every thing; and though the cream and the fruit were ſtrong allurements, added to the civil things the gardener uſed to ſay to her, yet

for ſome time ſhe forbore her viſits at Mr. Banks's, but by degrees the acquaintance was ſecretly renewed, which coſt Mary a falſehood every time ſhe was with theſe people, whoſe company her miſtreſs had ſo poſitively forbidden. One day Mrs. Boucher went to pay a viſit of two or three days at her father's, a few miles off. The farmer could not go with her, for he was buſy ſelling his grain and getting his rent ready for his landlord; and had got the money in the houſe on the Saturday which he meant to pay away on the Monday.

On Sunday after church he went out; charging Mary to ſtay at home and be careful of the houſe; her two friends from Mr. Banks's, took the opportunity of her being alone to come and drink tea with her; they had got notice of the farmer's having ſold his grain, and as they intended to rob their maſter's houſe and go off with the ſpoil the next night, the gardener thought he might as well take the farmer's money with him; he remembered he had once bought ſome dung for his garden of him and ſaw him put the money in a bureau in a little parlour.

While Mary was getting tea the gardener pulled open the parlour door, and ſaid, "● here is a clever little cool room, let us remove the things in here." When they had got into that room he ſaw the bureau, conſidered the lock, and then looking out at the window he took occaſion, unobſerved by Mary, to examine the faſtenings and how he could eaſily get in at night. Whilſt he was thus employed, one of the farmer's ploughboys paſſing by ob-

ſerved this man looking out of his maſter's window; he wondered at it, becauſe he knew the farmer was not at home.

Mary took care to diſmiſs her gueſts before her maſter's return; and on his aſking her if any one had been there ſhe replied *nobody*. The next morning when Boucher came down into the little room, he ſaw his bureau broken open, and the caſh that had been in it taken away.

The farmer inquired of all his people, and the ploughboy mentioned his having ſeen Mr. Banks's gardener looking out of the window, and ſaid he had heard that the two ſervants were gone off that morning, and had robbed Mr. Banks's houſe of plate and whatever they could carry off. This, compared with what the ploughboy had obſerved, and with Mary's having denied that any body had been there, fixed their ſuſpicion on her as having been concerned in the robbery. She was forced to confeſs that Mr. Banks's ſervants were with her in the afternoon to tea, but ſtrongly denied knowing any thing of the robbery, however they opened her box, there they found ſix new ſilver tea-ſpoons marked with the firſt letters of Boucher's name, ſealed up in a paper. The farmer knew his wife had ſix new ones from London not long before, and doubted not theſe were the ſame. The girl's guilt now appeard plain.

But to return to Mr. Heartwell, whom we left entering the cloſet in which Mary was, as ſoon as her purſuers were gone. Though he by no means

know all that we have related of this unhappy girl, he ſaw that appearances were ſtrong againſt her. Yet he was very unwilling to believe the worſt, and immediately raiſed her with kindneſs from the ground. "Mary," ſaid he, "if you will now be perfectly ſincere with me I will befriend you as much as juſtice will permit. I find the chief cauſe of your being ſo ſtrongly ſuſpected is, that you have departed from the truth, this is always attended with great danger as well as guilt; you have been enough inſtructed in religion to know that deceit is hateful to God, that he has denounced dreadful puniſhment for liars—even 'the lake that burneth with brimſtone and fire,' that he has commanded every one to put away lying, and to ſpeak the truth to his neighbour from his heart; that lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but truth is his delight. For my part, I pity your youth, and I wiſh to ſave and ſerve you, but unleſs I can hope to cure you of this fault, I muſt with a grieved heart give you up to your wretched fate, for it is impoſſible for me to do you any good." Whilſt he ſpoke his eyes filled with tears, and poor Mary cried without ceaſing. She now tried to ſpeak, but her ſobs prevented her, at laſt ſhe ſaid, "I ſee, I ſee that I have undone myſelf, that even you who are ſo good will never more believe me, but give me up to miſery and deſpair; I would now moſt truly confeſs to you every thing, but you will not, you cannot believe me! and I ſhall juſtly ſuffer for what I have not done, becauſe I have made myſelf unworthy of belief. O ſir, what can I do? Is there no place for repentance? no good chriſtian who will try me once again?

Will you not at leaſt hear me if you cannot believe me, whilſt I tell you of all my ſins, and the ſad diſgraces they have brought upon me?" "I will hear you," ſaid the good old man, "but if you now deceive me, or hide any thing from me, I will never more concern myſelf about you, but muſt leave you to reap the bitter fruits of your baſeneſs of heart." Mary now threw herſelf at his feet—kiſſed his hands—and bathed them with her tears. "O ſir," ſhe ſaid, "God knows I have no wiſh to deceive or to hide any thing from you, if I do, I conſent that you ſhall give me up for ever." She then told what we have before related. When ſhe came to the article of the tea-ſpoons, he deſired her to explain whoſe they were, and how ſhe came by them. She told him that on the Sunday evening when Mr. Banks's maid and gardener drank tea with her, the former on going away took her aſide, and giving her a little parcel ſealed up, begged of her to put that in her box and keep it for her till ſhe ſent for it; the reaſon of this ſhe would tell her when they met again. She went away without giving Mary time to aſk another queſtion. She was confuſed when aſked about the ſpoons, becauſe ſhe thought ſhe ſhould betray her friend, and becauſe ſhe was aſhamed to confeſs the intimacy ſhe had kept up with her, againſt her miſtreſs's orders and her own promiſes. How the ſpoons came to be marked with Boucher's letters, E B ſhe could not imagine; for the woman's name who gave them to her was Sarah Fiſher.

Mr. Heartwell kept Mary that night, and took

pains to impreſs on her a deep ſenſe of her ſin. Next day they had a viſit from farmer Boucher. who told them that his wife on her return, examined her drawer, and found the ſpoons ſafe as ſhe had left them. They were marked with the ſame letters as thoſe found in Mary's box; and as the farmer had ſcarce looked at them ſince they came home, he did not obſerve that the others were not exactly like them. As this was the only poſitive proof alledged againſt Mary, the farmer now promiſed to give her no farther trouble; though he ſtill knew ſhe had entertained the robbers the day before, on this account he would by no means take her again into his houſe, but paid her the little wages due to her, and diſmiſſed her from his ſervice. Mr. Heartwell, who was pleaſed to find her account ſo far true, tried to perſuade the Bouchers to let her ſtay with them a little while at leaſt, as a juſtification of her character; but they were ſo diſguſted with her having kept up the acquaintance with theſe bad people, in defiance of their orders and her own promiſes, that they could not think themſelves ſafe with ſuch a ſervant in the houſe. And Mr. Heartwell, with all the compaſſion he felt for her, could not venture to preſs them nor to anſwer for her future conduct. However he promiſed that if ſhe kept her preſent reſolutions, he would befriend her as much as he could. He put ſome proper books into her hands, and took her to her mother, whom they found almoſt diſtracted by the news which had reached her of her daughter having been taken up for a robbery; the poor woman every day grew worſe after this ſhock, and ſome weeks after her wretched daughter received

her dying forgiveneſs, but could never forgive herſelf for the anguiſh ſhe had cauſed her mother, which ſhe was perſuaded had haſtened her end.

Poor Mary had another ſorrow. In the village where ſhe had lived with farmer Boucher, was a creditable Baker, his ſon Thomas was bred up to the buſineſs, and was a very honeſt, ſober, agreeable young man. He had often beſtowed kind looks and kind words on Mary, but had not ventured to make her an offer, as he thought his father would never conſent to his marrying ſo poor a girl. She, on her ſide, liked him well enough to wiſh he would ſpeak out. A little before the unfortunate affair at Boucher's, the old baker died, his ſon ſucceeded to his ſhop and all his property, and was well eſteemed. Whilſt poor Mary was nurſing her dying mother, this young man had occaſion to call at Mr. Heartwell's, who overheard him in talk with his maid Bridget about Mary, and lament the ſad diſgrace that had befallen her, he added, "I am ſure it has been a great concern to me, for I own I liked the young woman; and now that I am my own maſter ſhould have tried to obtain her for my wife, had ſhe preſerved a better character." Bridget put in a good word for her, and aſſured him that her maſter believed her entirely innocent of the robbery; to this he replied, "whether ſhe had any knowledge of the wicked intentions of thoſe vile ſervants nobody can know, but thus much has been clearly proved, that ſhe denied the truth of their having been with her, and had broke her ſolemn promiſes to her miſtreſs, by keeping them company for ſome time, there-

fore ſhe is no wife for me. I could not be happy unleſs I could make a friend of my wife and depend on her truth and faithfulneſs, Her pretty face and good-humour would be nothing to me, without truth and honeſty. Next to a good conſcience the beſt thing is a good character. I bleſs God I have never forfeited my own, nor will I ever marry a woman that has loſt her's." Mr. Heartwell was much pleaſed with the young baker's way of thinking, and very ſorry that Mary had loſt ſuch a huſband. As his chief concern was to complete the poor young creature's reformation, he thought nothing would make ſo deep an impreſſion on her mind as this mortifying conſequence of her ill behaviour: he reſolved on telling her all that the young man had ſaid. He did ſo; and ſhe took it ſo much to heart that ſhe never after held up her head. Her mother's death, which happened ſoon after, left her without any earthly comfort. What before was liking, was now changed into a ſtrong affection; ſhe ſaw what a happy lot would have been her's had ſhe been as true and honeſt as the man ſhe liked. She loſt all her ſpirits, her mind was always full of bitter remorſe and ſhame. She thought ſhe deſerved all the miſery ſhe felt, and only prayed that God would accept her ſorrow for her ſin. She made no complaints; but her looks ſhewed that health as well as peace of mind had forſaken her.

Her mother's death obliged her to quit the alms houſe, and ſhe then told Mr. Heartwell that ſhe was unable to bear the diſgrace ſhe had brought upon herſelf in that neighbourhood, and was re-

ſolved to go and get bread in ſome diſtant country, where ſhe was not known. The good man, who felt like a father for every one of his flock, when in diſtreſs, tried to ſooth her and to perſuade her to ſtay where ſhe was, and to look to her heavenly friend, but he could not prevail. She could not bear the thoughts of living near Thomas, whom ſhe had loſt for ever. So the Vicar gave her what he could ſpare to pay her journey and maintain her 'till ſhe could get an employment; he then gave her a letter to a clergyman who lived about fifty miles off, begging him to get her into ſome honeſt ſervice. She took leave of him with an almoſt broken heart, and grew ſo ill and weak on her journey, that when ſhe carried her letter to the clergyman, he told her, ſhe appeared too ill for ſervice. In a few days ſhe grew a little better, told him ſhe thought ſhe could now get her bread if he would have the goodneſs to recommend her: that ſhe cared not how low the place or the wages were if ſhe could but be maintained, and would do all in her power to give ſatisfaction. He ſoon got her into a ſervice, hard labour ſoon haſtened on a decline which her ſorows had begun, and ſhe ſoon became ſo ill that nothing better could be done for her than to place her in an hoſpital.

Whilſt ſhe was there a letter from Mr. Heartwell informed her that her vile ſeducers were taken, tried, and executed. The ſpoons were claimed by Elizabeth Bearcroft, Mr. Banks's houſekeeper. Sarah Fiſher had found them locked up in a cupboard after the reſt of the ſtolen plate was packed up. She put them into her pocket as ſhe was go-

ing to farmer Boucher's on the Sunday, but recollecting that perhaps the marks upon them might lead to her detection, in case of misfortune, she suddenly took it into her head as she was going away to leave them with Mary, as before related. Mr. Heartwell had taken the pains to visit these people in prison after their condemnation, and had got from the woman a confirmation of the poor girl's account. Mary languished several weeks in the hospital, and meekly applied her whole mind to obtain the forgiveness of God, through the merits of a Saviour.

The good clergyman assisted her in the great work of repentance, and pointed out to her the only true grounds on which she could hope to obtain it.

Thus death brought on by grief and shame at eighteen years of age, was the consequence of bad company, false promises, and FALSE EXCUSES.—May all who read this story, learn to walk in the strait paths of truth. The way of duty is the way of safety. But "the wicked fleeth when no man pursueth, while the righteous is bold as a lion."

THE END.

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